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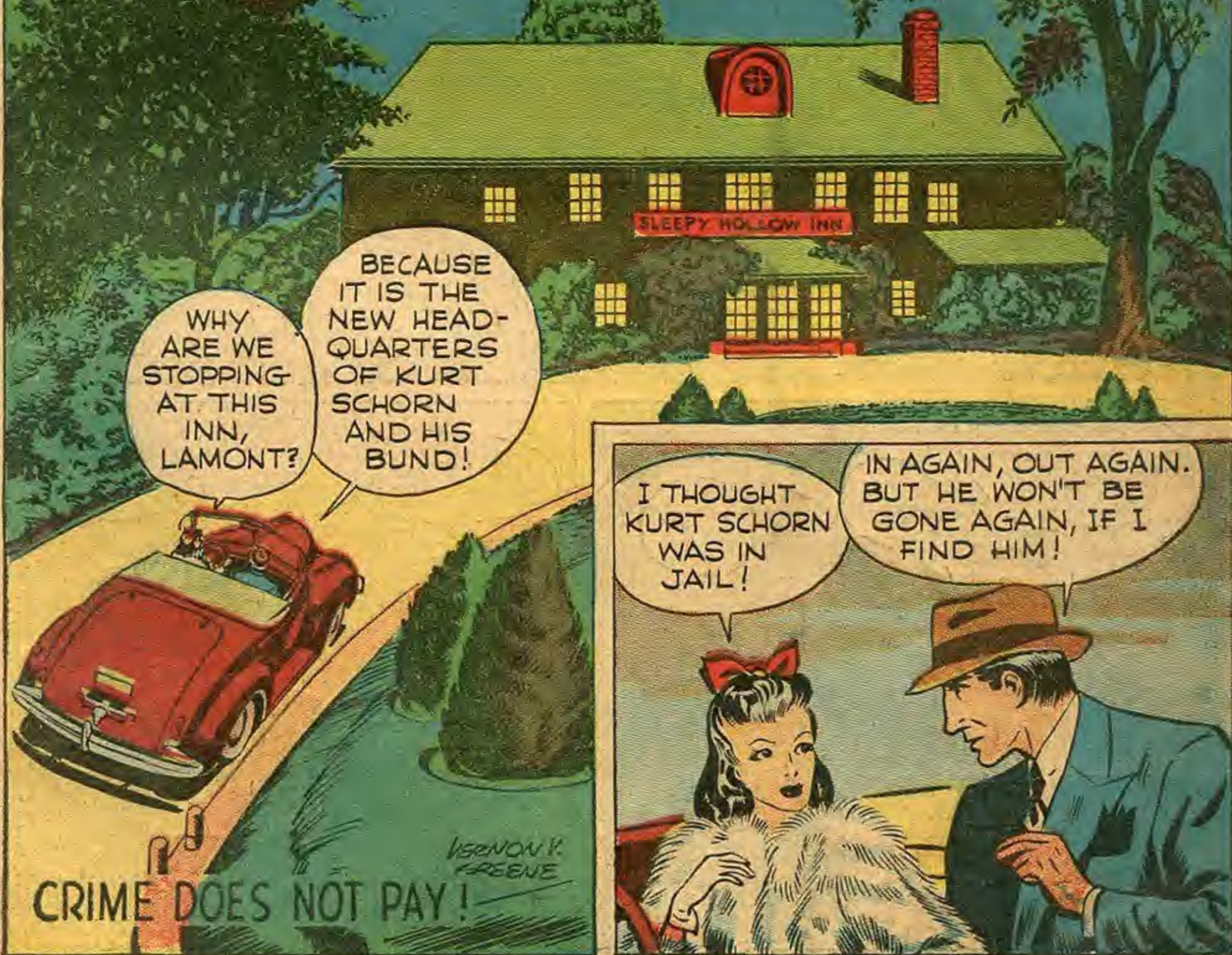
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THE SHADOW

battles the

BUND



WHY ARE WE STOPPING AT THIS INN, LAMONT?

BECAUSE IT IS THE NEW HEAD-QUARTERS OF KURT SCHORN AND HIS BUND!

I THOUGHT KURT SCHORN WAS IN JAIL!

IN AGAIN, OUT AGAIN. BUT HE WON'T BE GONE AGAIN, IF I FIND HIM!

VERNON K. GREENE

CRIME DOES NOT PAY!



THE SHADOW PLUNGES IN
WHERE THE BUND LEADER,
SCHORN, IS HOLDING MARGO.



IT'S THE
SHADOW!
KILL HIM!

HE'S SHOT
THE LIGHT
OUT!

WE CAN'T
SEE HIM!

THIS WAY—
FOOLS!

HE'S
SWINGING
THE
TABLE--
OW-W



AND YOU GO THIS
WAY, MARGO—THROUGH
THE WINDOW!



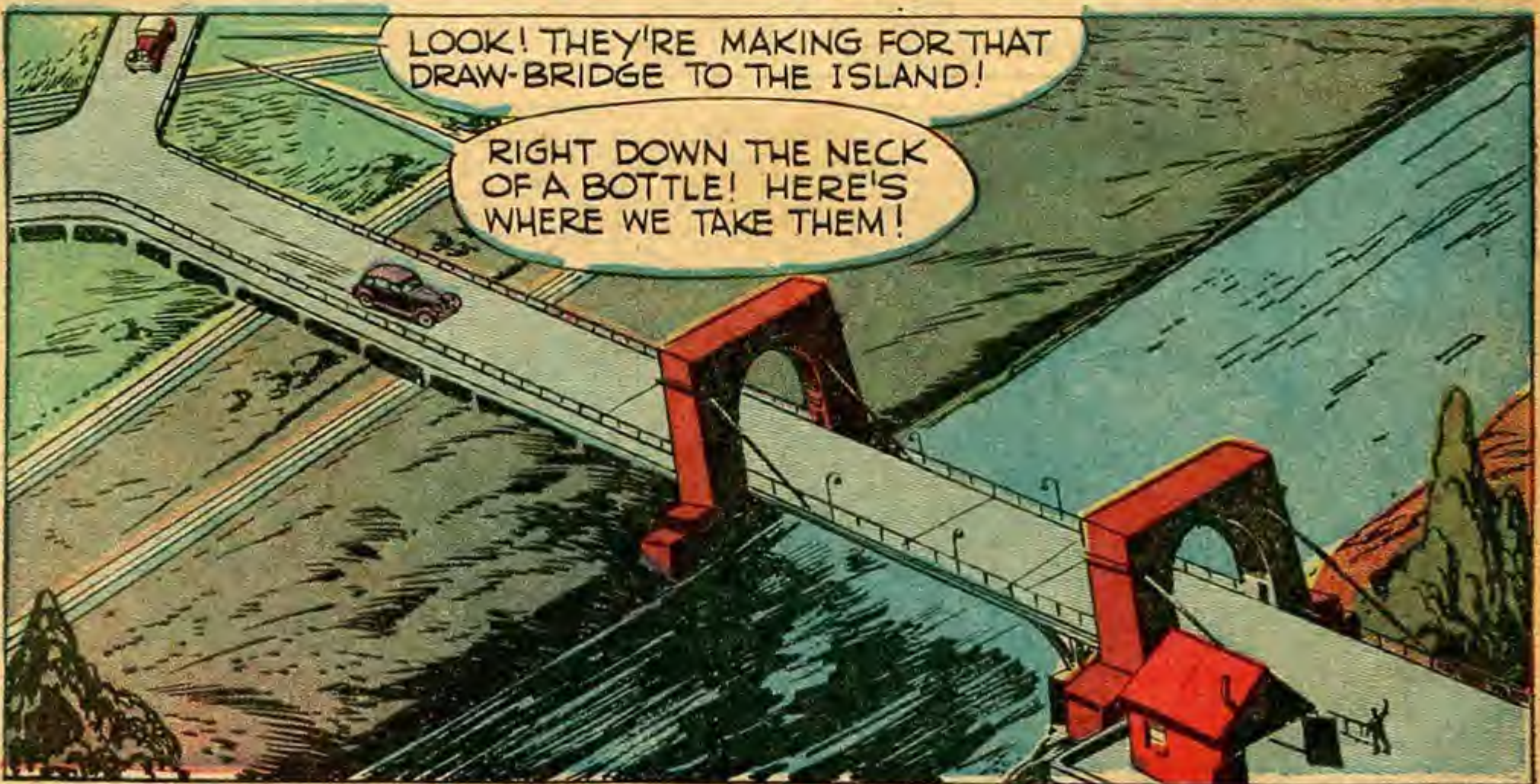
LOOK!
THERE GOES
KURT SCHORN.
HE'S DRIVING
AWAY---

WITH THE PICKED
MEMBERS OF HIS
BUND. COME ON—
WE'LL FOLLOW THEM!



LOOK! THEY'RE MAKING FOR THAT
DRAW-BRIDGE TO THE ISLAND!

RIGHT DOWN THE NECK
OF A BOTTLE! HERE'S
WHERE WE TAKE THEM!







GO BACK AND
TALK TO THE
BRIDGE KEEPER
WHILE I LOOK
AROUND!



I DIDN'T SEE
WHERE THE OTHER
CAR WENT. COME IN
AND I'LL SHOW YOU
A ROAD MAP

THAT
MIGHT
HELP!



-AND IF
THE MAP
WILL TELL
ME-- OH'H

I'LL DO THE
TELLING, SIS-
TER! AND YOU
WON'T DO ANY
TALKING.



CATCH THAT REVOLVER, MARGO!
GUARD HIM UNTIL I JOIN YOU!
HE WON'T JUST TELL US!
HE'LL **SHOW** US

SAY!
WHAT'S
GOT ME
?



IT CAME
THROUGH
THE WINDOW.
IT GOT ME.
WHAT WAS
IT?

JUST SOMETHING
CALLED THE
SHADOW. YOU'LL
SEE HIM SOON



THE SHADOW
WANTS TO
KNOW WHERE
SCHORN'S
CAR WENT.

I'LL
NEVER
TELL

NEVER? YOU'LL
TELL WITHIN TEN
SECONDS--
OR NEVER!



WHOEVER
YOU ARE,
I'LL TALK!





UNABLE TO OVERTAKE KURT SCHORN AND THE AGENTS, THE SHADOW AND MARGO LANE RETURN TO THE INN—





THE SHADOW
IS SEARCHING
FOR KURT
SCHORN,
NOTORIOUS
BUND LEADER
ENGAGED IN
SABOTAGE--
MEANWHILE,
MARGO LANE
TRAPS FREDA
LUHN, A
WOMAN
MEMBER
OF THE
BUND-AND!!

WELL, HERE'S THE
CAFE BOLERO. I MUST
REMEMBER THAT I'M
NO LONGER MARGO
LANE ---



I'M FREDA LUHN! WEARING THE
GREEN DRESS AND GOLD CLIP THAT
AGENT J WILL RECOGNIZE--THIS MAN
COMING IN! I
WONDER--



AH, GOOD
EVENING,
MISS LUHN

I HAVE RE-
SERVED A
TABLE FOR
YOU, MR.
JORMAN!

SO--
"J" STANDS
FOR JORMAN



BUT KURT GAVE ME NO
MESSAGE. HE SIMPLY
SAID TO MEET
YOU.

AH, VERY
GOOD. LET
US LEAVE
HERE



IT IS OBVIOUS THAT
KURT SCHORN WANTS
YOU TO MEET MY
SPECIAL FRIENDS

I'D BE
DELIGHTED

MARGO!
HOW DID SHE
GET INTO
THIS?



POSING AS FREDA LUHN, OF THE
BUND, MARGO ACCOMPANIES AGENT J

PERHAPS YOU HAVE
ALREADY MET SOME
OF MY
FRIENDS,
MISS LUHN

WHEW! I HOPE
NOT-- BUT I'D
BETTER BE READY



THIS IS FREDA LUHN,
GOOD FRIEND OF OUR
LEADER, KURT
SCHORN

NOT
TOO MANY
OF THEM!
HERE GOES!







THE FEDS HAVE GONE
AHEAD. BUT I'M SURE
LAMONT ISN'T WITH
THEM FOR HERE COMES
HIS "FRIEND" THE
SHADOW



AND
THE FEDS
ARE AFTER
THEM. WE'LL
FOLLOW!

LOOK, KURT
SCHORN AND THE
BUND MEMBERS
STARTING FROM
THE CORNERS!



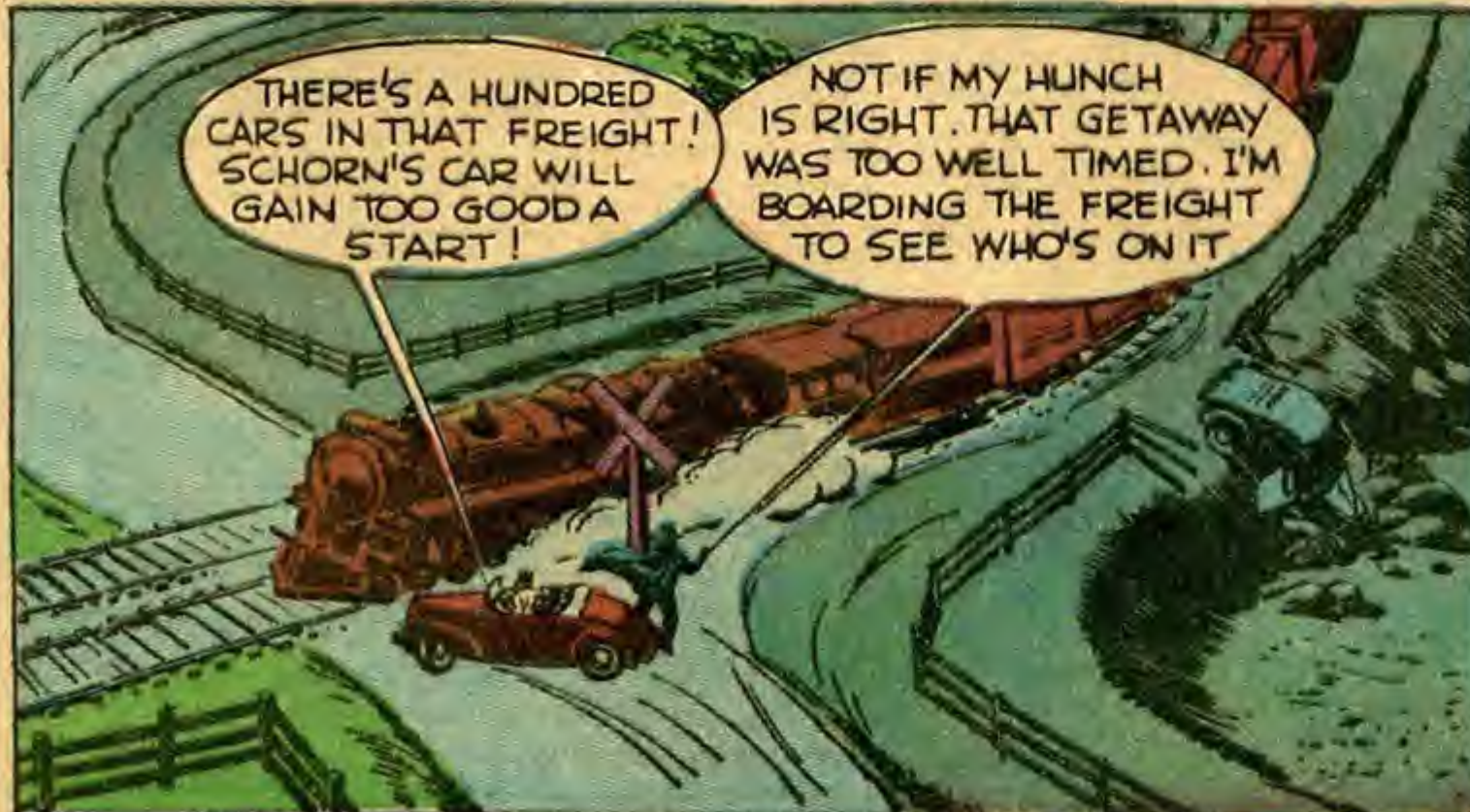
SCHORN
MADE IT!
MORE OF
HIS LUCK!

THE FEDS ARE
DITCHING THEIR CAR.
WE'LL HAVE TO GIVE
THEM A LIFT,
MARGO



THERE'S A HUNDRED
CARS IN THAT FREIGHT!
SCHORN'S CAR WILL
GAIN TOO GOOD A
START!

NOT IF MY HUNCH
IS RIGHT. THAT GETAWAY
WAS TOO WELL TIMED. I'M
BOARDING THE FREIGHT
TO SEE WHO'S ON IT



LONE-HANDED, THE
SHADOW INTENDS
TO BOARD THE MOV-
ING FREIGHT TO
SEE IF MEMBERS
OF THE BUND HAVE
DONE THE SAME
(FROM THE OTHER
SIDE) ODDS MEAN
NOTHING TO THE
SHADOW, WHEN
HE SEEKS TO
MEET KURT
SCHORN.

THE SHADOW BOARDS THE
SPEEDING FREIGHT---



I WAS RIGHT. SOME OF THOSE BUND
MEMBERS LEFT THEIR CAR AND GRABBED
THIS FREIGHT. I HOPE KURT SCHORN
IS WITH THEM!



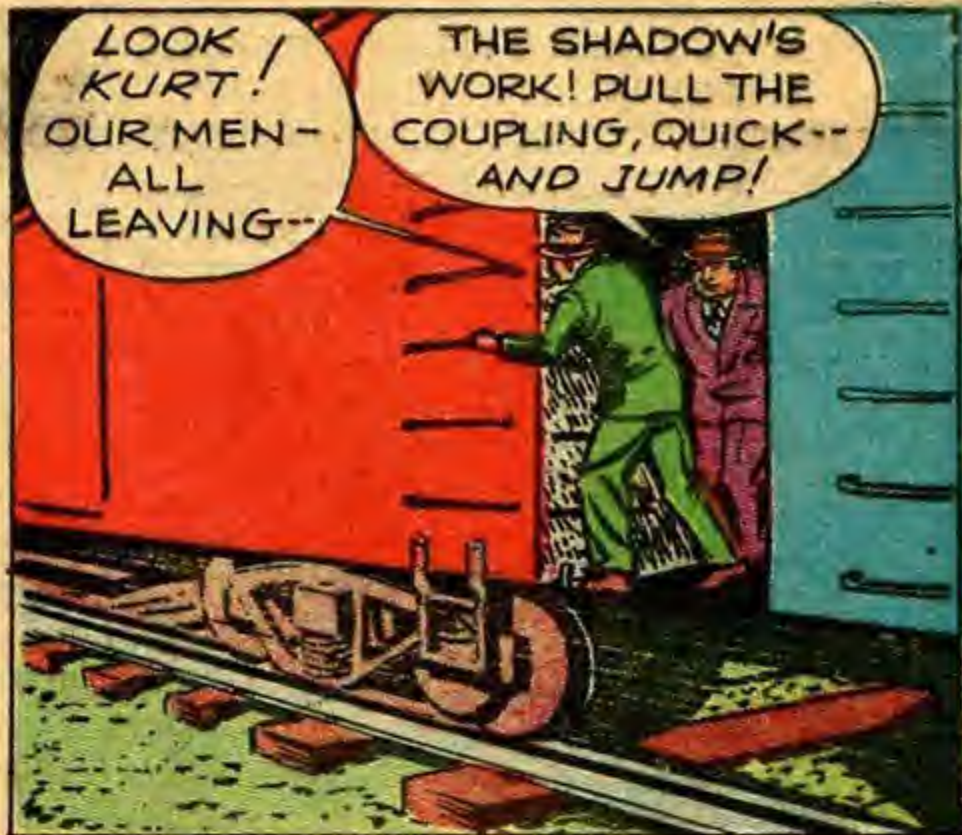
THE FAST
FREIGHT
HITS A
TURN!!!

I KNEW THAT CURVE
WOULD HELP!
THE TABLES
HAVE TURNED
MY WAY!





THERE GOES THE
LAST OF THEM--
BUT KURT SCHORN
WASN'T WITH
THEM!



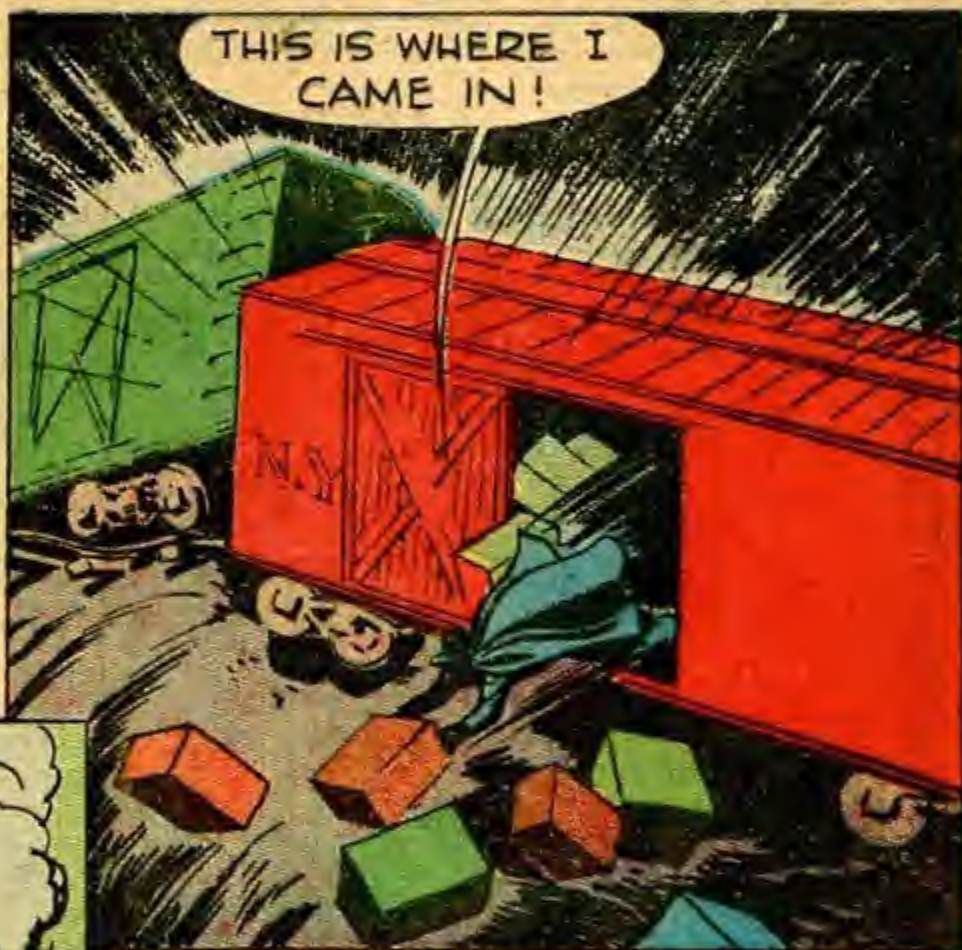
LOOK!
KURT!
OUR MEN--
ALL
LEAVING--

THE SHADOW'S
WORK! PULL THE
COUPLING, QUICK--
AND JUMP!



ODD, THIS SHIP-
MENT--A STANDARD
BRAND OF
LACQUER!

IN THE
BOX CAR



THIS IS WHERE I
CAME IN!



LUCKY THAT BOX-CAR
TOOK THE ROLL IT DID.
THIS IS KURT SCHORN'S
WORK!



LATER ...

I KNEW YOU'D
MEET ME, FRED! I
WRECKED THE
TRAIN, AND THE
SHADOW WITH IT!

I WOULDN'T
TAKE THE LAST
PART FOR
GRANTED, KURT.



MARGO LANE UNDERSTANDS. SHE KNOWS THAT THE SHADOW TOOK UP THE CHASE WHERE THE FEDS LEFT OFF -- BUT BOB JORMAN HAS NOT LINKED CRANSTON WITH THE SHADOW.



THE SHADOW KNOWS THAT SCHORN AND BUND MEMBERS WERE ON THE FREIGHT AND WRECKED IT TO GET RID OF HIM. WHAT HE DOES NOT KNOW IS--



YES, WITH LACQUER. NOTICE THE TINY HOLES THAT I HAVE DRILLED. THE LACQUER IS TOO THICK TO FLOW---



BUT UNDER HEAT, CERTAIN INGREDIENTS EVAPORATE. THOSE THAT REMAIN HAVE THE QUALITIES OF A HIGH-POWERED EXPLOSIVE!



SURROUND THE PLACE! THEN WAIT UNTIL I LEARN WHAT THOSE TWO ARE ABOUT!



KURT SCHORN AND HIS BUND ARRIVE TO TRAP THE SHADOW.



SO WE MEET AGAIN MISS LANE!

FREDA LUHN!

YOU WASTE TIME TRYING TO HOLD ME WHILE YOUR FRIEND CRANSTON IS IN DANGER FROM KURT SCHORN!



WHY, SHE BLUFFED ME INTO LETTING HER GET AWAY! OR DID SHE? I'D BETTER CALL LAMONT AT HIS LABORATORY



IF PARTIAL EVAPORATION MAKES THIS LACQUER A HIGH EXPLOSIVE, IT WOULD BE A TERRIBLE INSTRUMENT IN THE HANDS OF KURT SCHORN!



THAT'S WHY THOSE SHIPMENTS INTERESTED THE BUND. THERE'S THE PHONE, JORMAN. CALL ME IF THE STUFF SIZZLES

THANKS, MARGO. I'LL SOON KNOW IF FREDA BLUFFED YOU. I'LL LOOK AROUND--MAYBE SCHORN IS NEAR



SO CRANSTON IS THE SHADOW. GOOD! ONE BULLET WILL SETTLE BOTH!



BOB JORMAN DROPS THE BOILING CAN
OF HIGH EXPLOSIVE ----

IT'S GOOD-
BYE--US!

NOT QUITE! THE OLD
STATUE OF LIBERTY PLAY
IS STILL A GOOD ONE!



HOT, EVEN WHEN
HANDLED WITH GLOVES!
A LITTLE JUGGLING
WILL COOL IT!

LOOK OUT!
SCHORN IS THROW-
ING THE OTHER CAN



AND A STRAIGHT
HIT! ON THE
FLY!



ARE
THEY BOTH
IN THERE,
KURT?

CRANSTON
AND
JORMAN
?

YES!
AND THE
SHADOW TOO!
IT IS DEATH
TO ALL!



HAVING WRECKED CRANSTON'S LABORATORY, BURYING ITS OCCUPANTS IN THE RUINS, KURT SCHORN, THE BUND LEADER, DEPARTS WITH THE MEMBERS OF HIS EVIL-DOING TRIBE.

CRANSTON WAS THE SHADOW. HE AND THE FED ARE DEAD. WE HAVE LEARNED HOW POWERFUL THE LACQUER EXPLOSIVE IS, AND THE SECRET REMAINS OURS!



IN THE LAB

JORMAN IS REGAINING CONSCIOUSNESS. I'LL STOW AWAY THIS HAT AND CLOAK.



WHAT WERE YOU SAYING ABOUT THE SHADOW, JORMAN?

HE SAVED OUR LIVES, CRANSTON! THE BOMB HE THREW HIT THE ONE SCHORN CHUCKED! BOTH BURST IN THE DOORWAY. THE BLAST DIDN'T REACH US.



NO SIGN OF THE SHADOW. HE'S GONE AFTER SCHORN. I'LL CALL MY MEN---

I WOULDN'T DO THAT, JORMAN! I KNOW A BETTER WAY TO DEAL WITH KURT SCHORN!



THERE IS A BETTER WAY--- THE SHADOW KNOWS!

AS CRANSTON, THE SHADOW REVEALS HIS PLAN---

SCHORN THINKS WE'RE DEAD. HE WILL, THEREFORE, GO THROUGH WITH HIS SCHEME REGARDING EXPLOSIVE LACQUER

I GET IT, CRANSTON! HE'LL NEVER GUESS THAT DEAD MEN ARE CHECKING ON HIM.



IT MEANS INVESTIGATING SHIPMENTS FROM THE LACQUER PLANT. WHO WILL DO THAT FOR US?

I'LL TELL YOU AFTER WE'RE IN THE CAR. WE DON'T WANT PEOPLE TO SEE TWO "DEAD MEN" ALIVE!





KURT SCHORN AND HIS BUND ARE WATCHING FOR A SHIPMENT OF LACQUER DESTINED FOR AN AIRPLANE ASSEMBLY PLANT. THEY INTEND TO FOLLOW, CONVERT THE LACQUER INTO HIGH EXPLOSIVE AND BLAST THE ASSEMBLY PLANT!

GOOD WORD, FRED, FROM OUR INSIDE MEN AT THE LACQUER FACTORY. A SPECIAL SHIPMENT IS GOING OUT

AFTER THE CLOSING HOUR! IT IS THE SHIPMENT WE EXPECTED, KURT!



AT THE LACQUER FACTORY

YOU ARE MY MOST TRUSTED MEN. DELIVER THIS SHIPMENT TO THE OLD APEX AUTOMOBILE PLANT

I KNOW THE PLACE. IT'S BEEN EMPTY FOR YEARS



ODD THAT I SHOULD FIND THIS IMPORTANT ORDER ON MY DESK, AFTER EVERY ONE ELSE HAD GONE.



YOU'LL PHONE NOBODY. KURT SCHORN TOLD US TO STOP YOU!

MAYBE I SHOULD PHONE THE FEDS. WHAT--

THERE'S NO ONE HERE TO HELP YOU



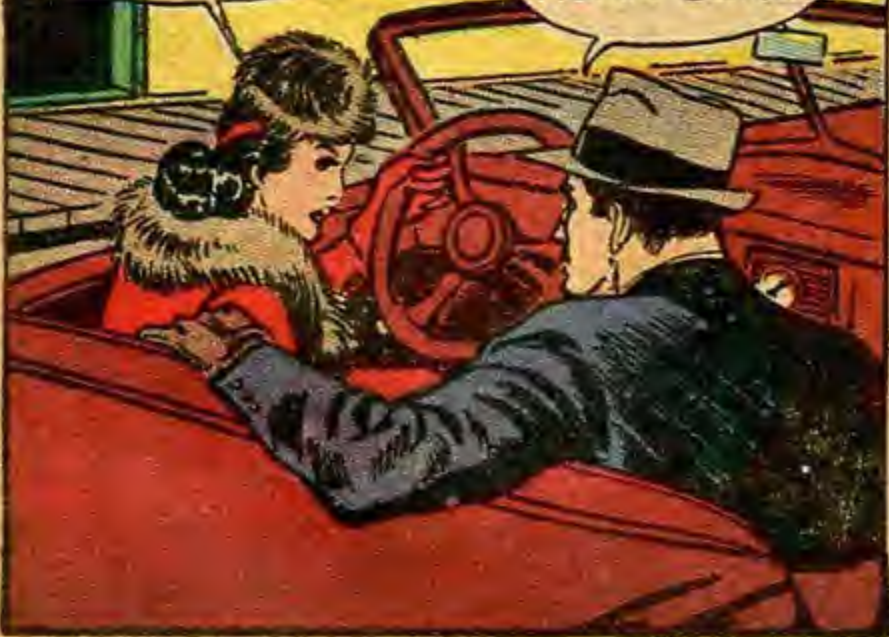
ALLOW ME TO CORRECT THAT STATEMENT!

THE SHADOW!



BUT I DON'T THINK LAMONT CRANSTON CAME HERE TO THE LACQUER FACTORY, MR. JORMAN!

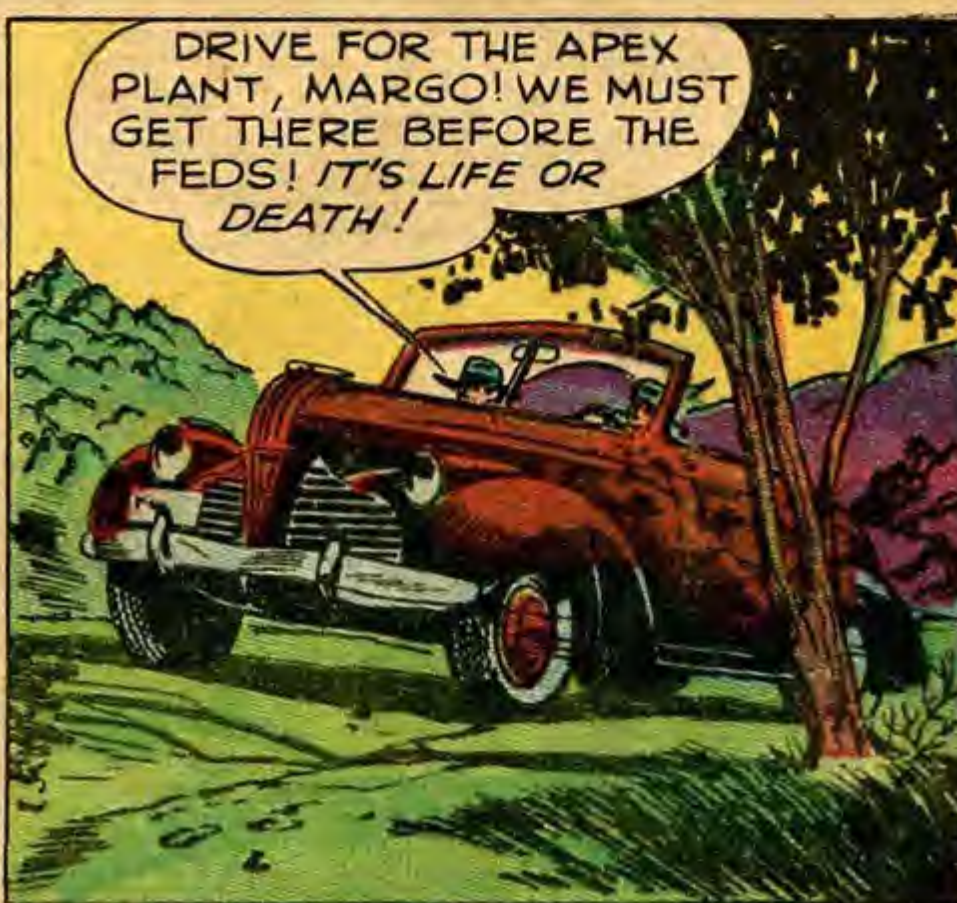
HE MIGHT HAVE-- LISTEN! I HEAR GUNS!



MISS LANE! LOOK--THE SHADOW SAVED ME FROM THOSE BUND MEMBERS WE'VE GOT TO HELP HIM!

HE DOESN'T NEED ANY HELP!





KURT SCHORN AND THE BUND ARE AT THEIR GOAL!

SO THIS IS THE APEX PLANT, TO BE USED FOR ASSEMBLING AIRPLANES. WELL, THE LACQUER IS HERE. UNLOAD IT MEN, PUNCH HOLES IN THE LIDS!



BUT, THE PLACE LOOKS ABANDONED, KURT!

THAT MEANS NOTHING, FREDA. THE MACHINERY WILL PROBABLY ARRIVE LATER. BY THEN, THE EVAPORATING LACQUER WILL EXPLODE



BOB JORMAN AND THE FEDS ARE READY WHEN----

THERE'S THE APEX PLANT. KURT SCHORN AND THE BUND ARE IN IT—LET'S GO!

STOP!
STAY WHERE YOU ARE!



THE SHADOW!

IT CAN'T BE!

HE'S A PHONY!
LET HIM HAVE IT!



NO, NO! DON'T SHOOT! HE IS THE SHADOW! MARGO LANE IS WITH HIM--

THANKS, JORMAN. I KNEW YOU'D KEEP COOL



NO NEED TO ATTACK THE APEX PLANT. I JUST PICKED UP A RADIO REPORT THAT ARMY PLANES ARE USING IT FOR TARGET PRACTICE TONIGHT! LISTEN--





THE SHADOW IS RIGHT! WHILE FEDS WATCH AND LISTEN, THE ARMY BOMBERS ARRIVE! KURT SCHORN AND THE BUND MEMBERS, PLACING EXPLOSIVES IN THE OLD PLANT WHERE THE SHADOW DECEYED THEM, ARE DUE FOR AN IMMEDIATE BLAST !!!

BOMBERS!
WE'RE DONE
FOR, KURT!

NOT YET! OUT
THIS WAY,
FREDA





THEIR WORK
FINISHED,
THE ARMY
BOMBERS
LEAVE

THE
BOMBARD-
MENT IS
OVER, BUT
NEW BLASTS
ARE COMING
!!!

COULD
THOSE
BE TIME
BOMBS
?

NO!
IT'S THE EX-
PLOSIVE LACQUER
THE BUND IS REAP-
ING THE FRUITS
OF IT'S OWN
PLOT !!!



THIS
WAY OUT,
KURT!

NO! THE
LACQUER
MAY GO
UP!



EXPLOSIONS OVER, THE SHADOW AND THE
FEDS DESCEND FROM THE HILL---



THERE'S
AT LEAST A
DOZEN BODIES
IN THOSE
RUINS

THE
WHOLE BUND
IS WIPED
OUT

THANKS
TO THE
SHADOW

THAT'S
THE END
OF THE
BUND!

LET'S
HOPE IT'S
PERMANENT
!!!



YOU MEAN
A FEW
MIGHT HAVE
ESCAPED
?

IF THEY
DID, WE'LL
BE WATCH-
ING FOR
THEM!

LEONARD V.
GREENE

THE SHADOW KNOWS!

THE "DEAD END" KIDS

by
LAFÉ THOMAS



SPIT

MILTY

TOMMY

ANGEL

DIPPY

T.B.





-AN' WHAT'A YA MEAN 'INVEST'?

YEH!
-WHAT??

I MEAN WE SHOULD GO TO SOME KIND O' SCHOOL WHERE THEY CAN TEACH US SOMETHING WE CAN MAKE A PILE O' DOUGH FROM...

COUNT ME OUT!



-AN' I'VE GOT JUST TH' THING PICKED OUT - A DRAMA SCHOOL OVER ON EIGHTH AVENUE! - WE CAN BE ACTORS! - AN' THOSE HOLLYWOOD GUYS MAKE PLENTY!!

YEH! MAYBE EVEN FIFTY BUCKS A WEEK!

DRAMA SCHOOL!
HA! HA!
HA! - I'M LAFFIN'!!



ALL WE GOTTA DO IS LEARN TO ACT, SHOW OURSELVES TO A STUDIO, AN' THEN WE'RE SET! - IT'S A CINCH!!

A HAWSE!
A HAWSE!
MY KING-
DOM FAW
A HAWSE!

ROMEO, O, ROMEO
-WHEREFAR ART
YOUSSE, ROMEO?

HERE I
AM, JULIETTE!
HERE, MY LOVE!

-HIRE A
HALL!



OK, GANG - THAT'S IT! WHAT'A YUH THINK? - SHALL WE TRY IT?

YEH-SURE!
LET'S GO!!

Be an Actor!
HOLLYWOOD
AWAITS YOU
See A Sinner...
Suite 203



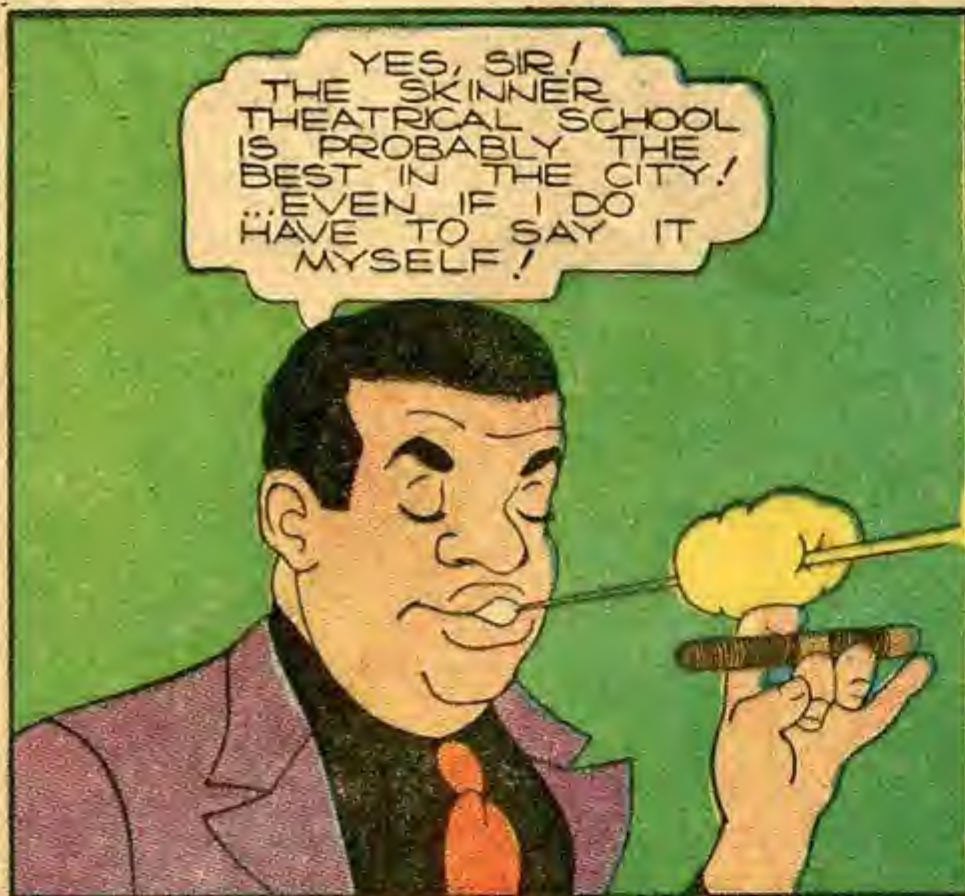
THAT'S RIGHT, MISTER!
WE GOT TH' TALENT
AN' YOU GOT TH'
SCHOOL! WHEN DO
WE START?



-BUT FIRST WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT WHEN WE FINISH YOUR TREATMENT, YOU'LL GUARANTEE TO GET US A MOVIN' PITCHER CONTRACT! - CAN YOU DO IT?

WHY, CERTAINLY, BOYS!
AFTER SIX WEEKS
WITH ME, YOU'LL BE
ABLE TO WRITE YOUR
OWN TICKET!

...TO HOLLYWOOD!









SPIT EXPLAINS EVERYTHING CONCERNING HIS NEW JOB...EXCEPT THE FACT THAT THE THEATRICAL SCHOOL IS NOT LEGITIMATE...



ALL RIGHT, SPIT. -WE CAN GO WHENEVER YOU'RE READY.

GO WHERE? WHAT'S CAROL GOT TO DO WITH IT?

OH-I FAWGOT T'TELL YAH- CAROL'S JOININ' DUH SCHOOL! -WELL, WE'LL BE SEEIN' Y'!



HEY! -WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE ANYWAY?!! -WHY DIDN'T CAROL TELL YOU SHE WAS GONNA TAKE DRAMA LESSONS? -WHAT'S TH' IDEA!

YEH! I'LL BET SPIT TALKED HER INTO IT - AN' HE WASN'T GONNA TELL US! -SOMETHIN' SMELLS FISHY!



I'M BEGINNIN' TO TRUST THAT GUY LESS AND LESS EVERY DAY!

YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT HE'S GONNA DO NEXT!

WHO CARES? WE GOT OUR CAREERS TO THINK OF!!







THE NEXT DAY

"...BUT ONE OF THE STUDENTS WHO ENROLLED IN THIS SCHOOL FORTUNATELY MADE RECORDINGS COVERING THEIR METHOD OF VERBALLY AGREEING TO ANY AND EVERYTHING IN ORDER TO ACQUIRE NEW PUPILS..."

TRAPPED WITH THEIR OWN DICTOGRAPH!

DOES IT SAY ANY MORE ABOUT ME?



SAY! HOW DID Y' GET TH' RECORDS OF SKINNER AN' MARKS? THAT WAS SLICK!

THAT WAS JUS' LUCK! I WAS IN TH' DRESSIN' ROOM PRACTICIN' ON TH' DICTOGRAPH WHEN THEY START JAWIN' -AN' WELL...! GOT SO INTERESTED, I FAWGOT TUH SHUT IT OFF!



SOME NOIVE-HUH? -WOIKIN' A CON' GAME LIKE 'AT ON POOR INNERSUNT, CHILDERN LIKE US! WAT A RACKET!

YEH - INNERSUNT!



WHAT'RE WE CRYIN' ABOUT? WE GOT OUR DOUGH BACK...AN' PLENTY OF EXPERIENCE T'BOOT! WHY, WITH TH' RIGHT CONNECTIONS WE MAY MAKE IT YET! WE'LL GET A MANAGER! WE'LL GET A AGENT! WE'LL GET A -

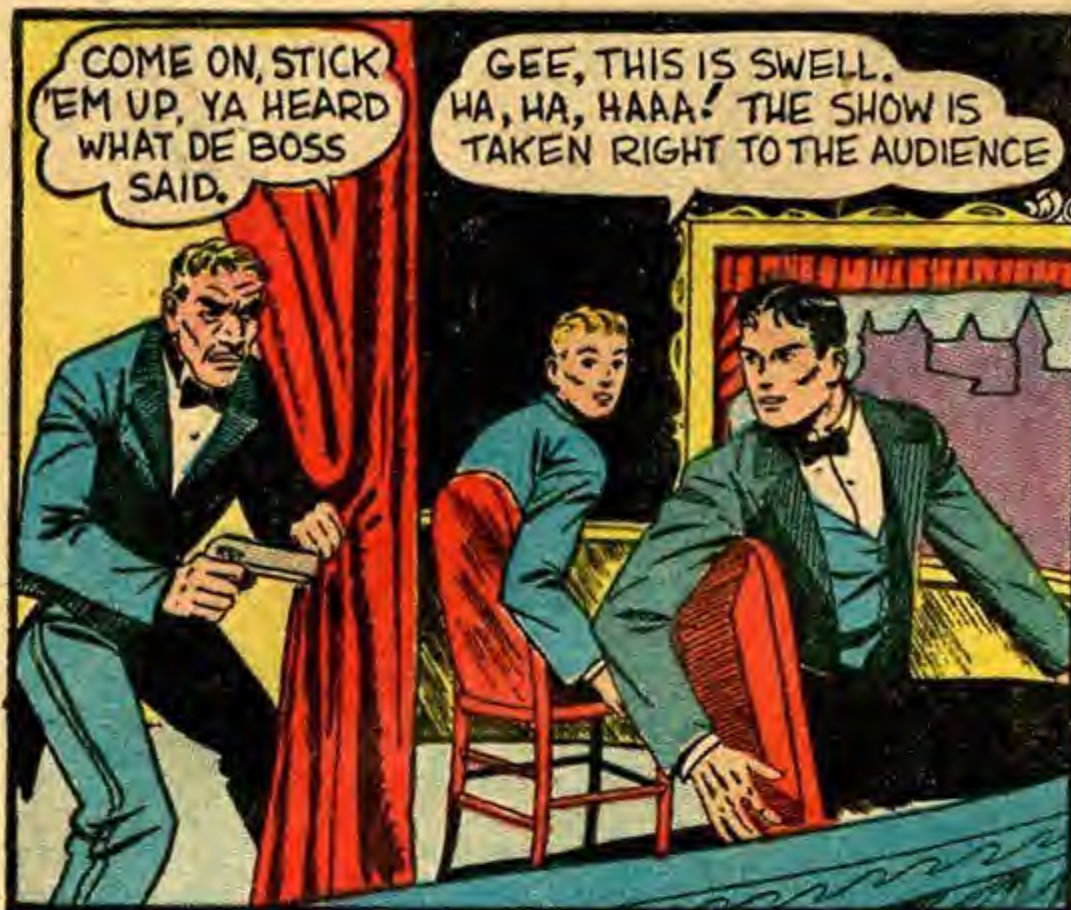
-THIS IS WHERE WE CAME IN!

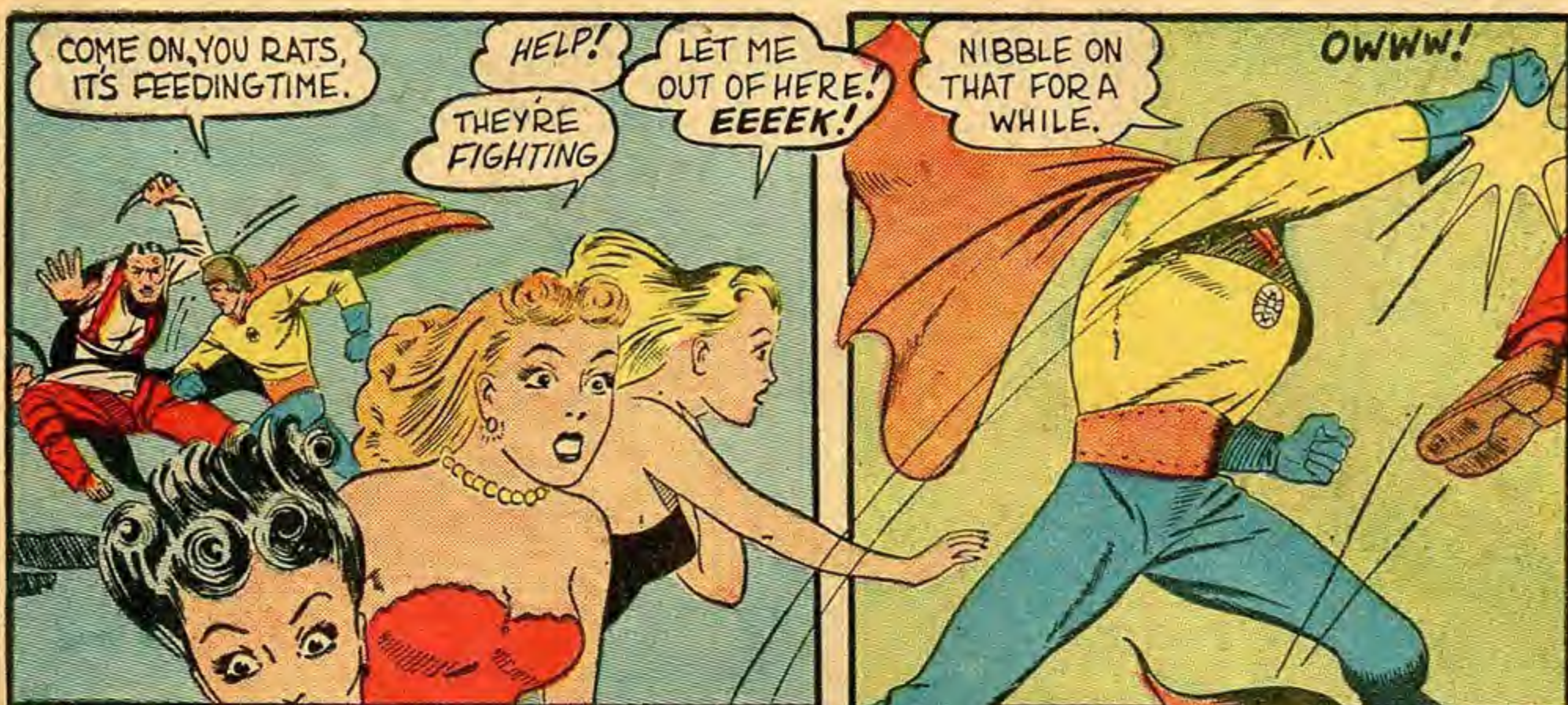


LAFÉ THOMAS
SCREWBALLS, INC.

















STOP CHOKING HIM-
DO YOU HEAR ME?
STOP IT!



HEEEELP!

THIS MAY NOT BE
GENTLEMANLY, BUT
IT CERTAINLY IS
EFFECTIVE.



SO YOU WON'T
TALK, EH? I'VE
ONLY BEEN PLAYING
SO FAR, BUT HERE
GOES.



SSSTOP, I'LL TALK!



--- AND SO WE LOCKED
THEM ALL IN THE OLD
PROP ROOM UNDER THE
STAGE



COME ON, IN YOU GO.
DON'T GET FRIGHTENED.
IT WON'T BE FOR LONG.
YOU'LL SOON GET A NICE
RIDE IN A FINE GREEN
PADDY WAGON.



NOW COME ON,
YOUNG MAN, LET'S
RELEASE THE STAFF
PRISONERS.

BAM
SOCK



COME ON,
JM!

RIGHTO, YOUR WASPISH
HIGHNESS, I JUST WANT
TO HIDE THIS MACUSHLA.





JOIN the Air Warden Cadets and help defend your nation. Be sure to read, in BILL BARNES—AMERICA'S AIR ACE COMICS, the story of this new organization, the boy and girl members of which are in training to learn how to spot airplanes and so defend our country.

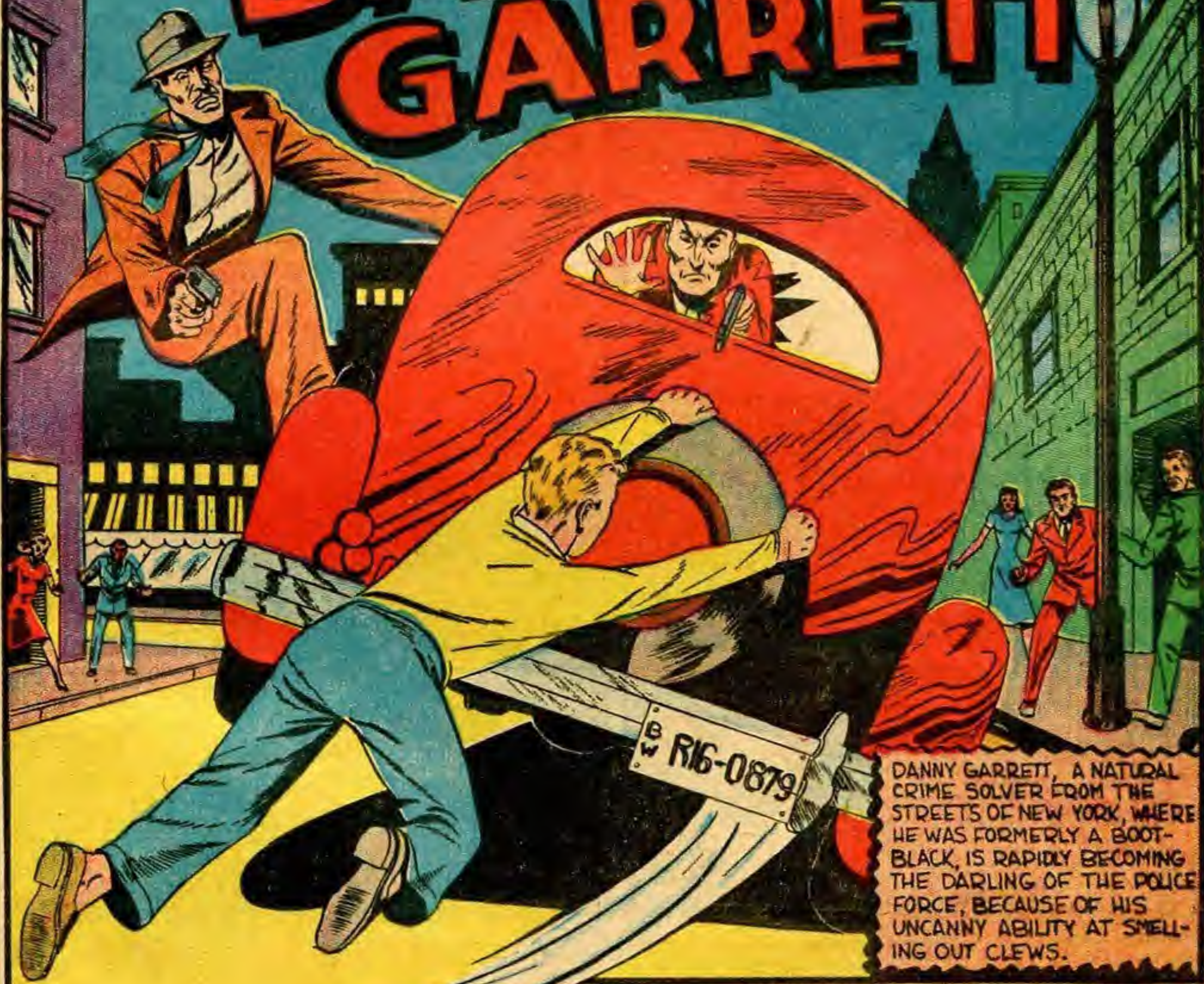
Bill Barnes
america's air ace
Comics

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DANNY GARRETT

BY RISS • FORMES



DANNY GARRETT, A NATURAL CRIME SOLVER FROM THE STREETS OF NEW YORK, WHERE HE WAS FORMERLY A BOOT-BLACK, IS RAPIDLY BECOMING THE DARLING OF THE POLICE FORCE, BECAUSE OF HIS UNCANNY ABILITY AT SMELLING OUT CLEWS.

DANNY GARRETT, ALTHOUGH MOVED AWAY FROM HIS OLD NEIGHBORHOOD FOR SOME TIME, STILL BRINGS ALL HIS SHOES TO OLD "POP" TO FIX.

HELLO, DANNY! SURE AN'TIS A LONG TIME SINCE YOU'VE BEEN TO SEE OLD POP.

BUT I STILL COME WHEN I'VE GOT SHOES TO FIX, DON'T I? WHEN ARE YOU GOING HOME, POP?

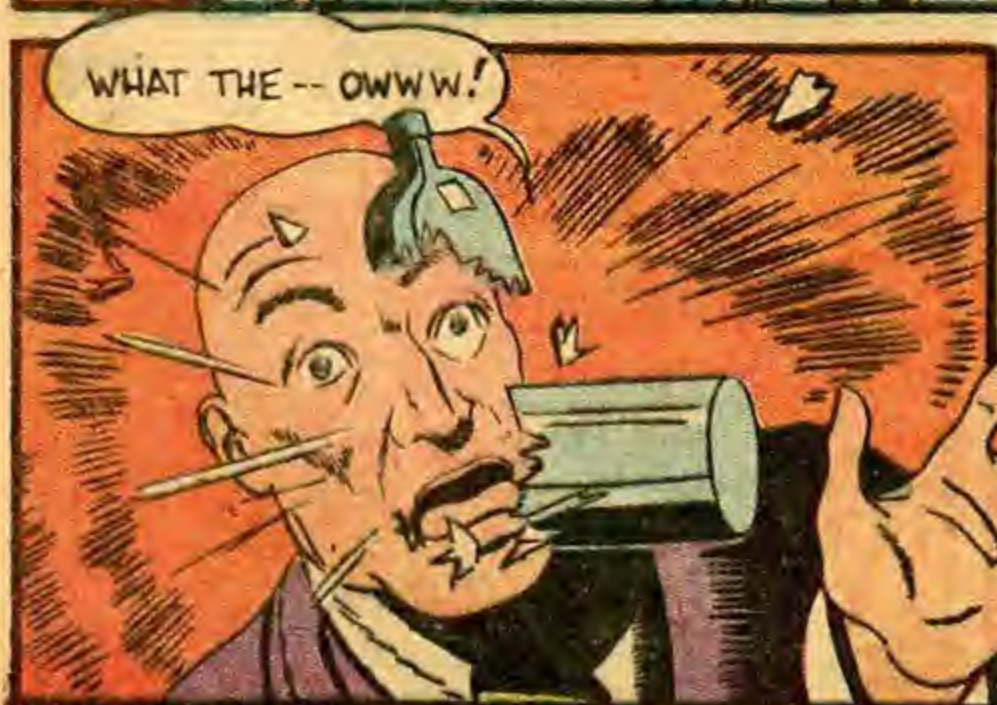




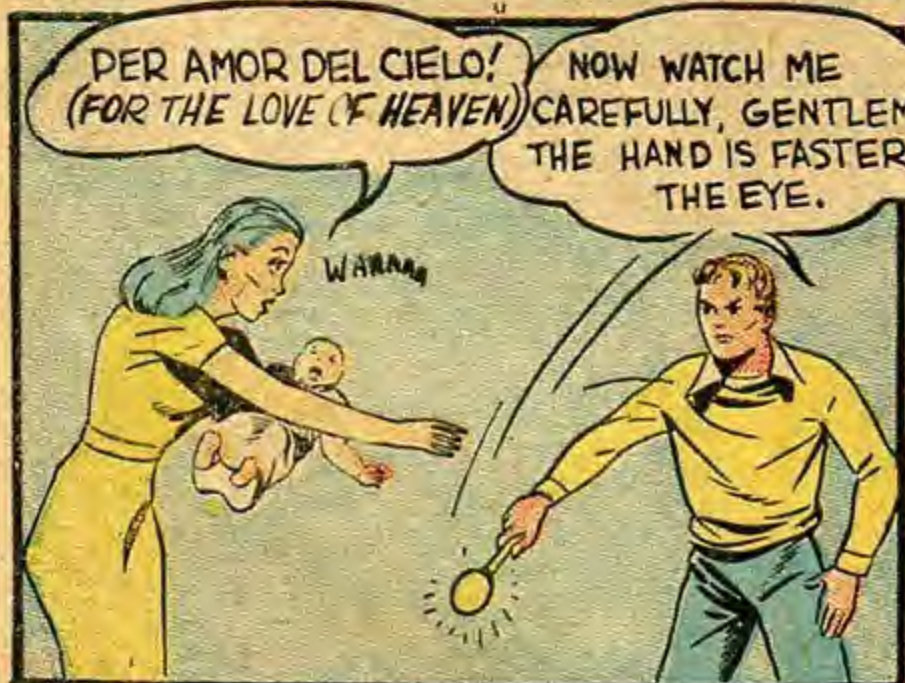
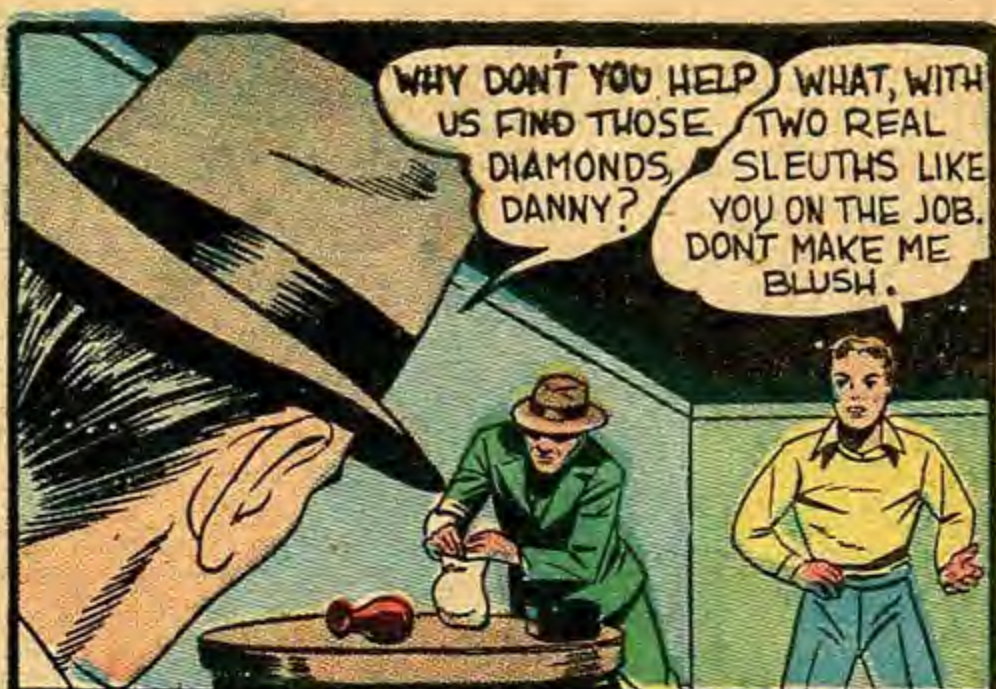












IRON MUNRO

THE ASTOUNDING MAN —

HEAR YE! HEAR YE! —
QUEEN TUA, OF CHARON,
HAS SPOKEN! IN
TWENTY-FOUR HOURS
THE EARTH MUST BE
TOTALLY DESTROYED!



IRON MUNRO,
SPENCER CARLISLE
AND THE
MAGYAN GIRL
SCIENTIST,
ANTO RAYL,
ARE IN THE
EMPIRE OF
CHARON, DEEP
IN THE BOWELS
OF THE EARTH.
TUA, QUEEN OF
CHARON, PLANS
TO CONQUER
THE ENTIRE
WORLD —

STEP ON IT, ANTO, — LET'S GET OFF IN OUR
ROCKET SHIP, — IT SEEMS TO BE TOO GOOD
TO BE TRUE THAT THE QUEEN LET US GO —!

SHE CAN'T BE
TRUSTED, IRON!



ANTO RAYL IS RIGHT!

AND THAT JUST ABOUT TRUMPS OUR LAST ACE, IRON!

THE CONTROLS ARE SMASHED— THE DEVILS!



WHILE IRON AND SPENCE WORK ON THE CONTROLS, ANTO RAYL LEAVES THE SHIP—

ANTO IS INSTANTLY OVERPOWERED BY A ROBED FIGURE AND WHISKED OFF INTO THE STYGIAN DARKNESS—

I WONDER IF ANY OF THOSE CHARONS ARE HANGING AROUND?



WELL, SPENCE, AT LEAST SHE'LL FLY!

IRON! ANTO RAYL HAS DISAPPEARED!

WE'LL BLAST THE CASTLE FROM UNDER THAT CRAZY QUEEN—!



SOUNDS LIKE A LOUDSPEAKER!

IRON, I PROMISED YOU THAT YOU WOULD GO FREE, — BUT THE GIRL WILL BE HELD IN CASE YOU TRY TO WARN THE WORLD —!

TURN YOUR TORCH ON THE SPEAKER, SPENCE!

AS THE BRIGHT BEAM LASHES UPWARDS, A STRANGE THING HAPPENS!

OH! MY EYES!

OWOO!

IRON, INSTANTLY REALIZING THAT THE CHARONS CAN'T STAND STRONG LIGHT, HAS A SUDDEN INSPIRATION —

A FEW MINUTES LATER —

IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, TUA, — I DON'T BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE ANTO RAYL ALIVE!

OH YOU DON'T? — WE'LL SOON SHOW YOU —!

SATISFIED, SURFACE MAN? — LEAVE NOW BEFORE I FORGET MY PROMISE —!

A BILLION CANDLEPOWER BEAM LANCES OUT AS SPENCE, — UNDER DIRECTIONS FROM IRON, TOUCHES A SWITCH IN THEIR ROCKET SHIP —

THIS WAY, ANTO, — HURRY!

HOP INTO THE SHIP AND WARN THE GOVERNMENT-- YOU'LL BE ABLE TO HANDLE IT--!

OH, BUT I CAN'T LEAVE YOU AND SPENCE!

WE HAVE WORK TO DO! TAKE OFF --- THAT'S AN ORDER, --- UPSA-DAISY--!

AS THE ROAR OF THE ROCKET SHIP'S EXHAUST FILLS THE CAVERN --

THE GIRL IS ESCAPING! DESTROY THEM ALL!

A HOPELESS FIGHT--

GREAT FUN, IRON, BUT THEY OUTNUMBER US TEN TO ONE!

IT DOESN'T MATTER AS LONG AS ANTO GETS CLEAR!

BUT HELP COMES FROM ABOVE--/
ANTO RAYL USES THE DEADLY Q-RAY
ABOARD IRON'S ROCKET SHIP!



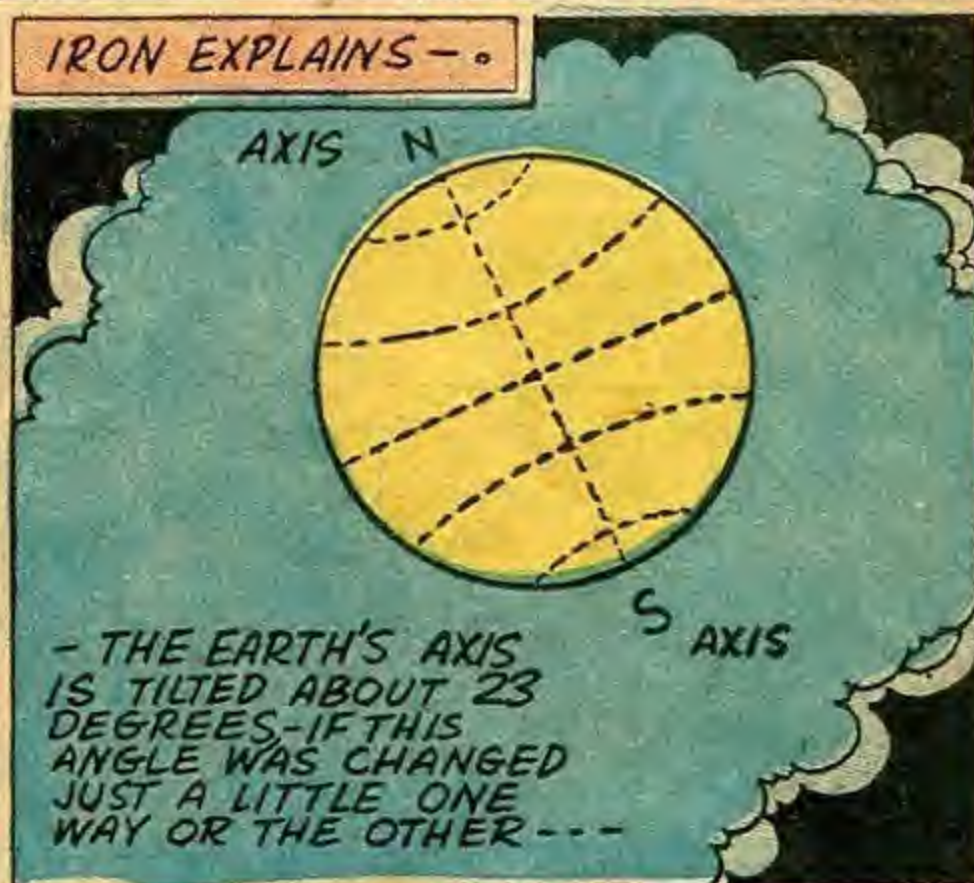
A COUNCIL OF WAR!

TELL ME, IRON, JUST WHAT IS
THIS PLAN FOR CONQUERING
THE EARTH?

WHY THE CHARONS
CLAIM THEY CAN
CHANGE THE AXIS
OF THE EARTH--!



IRON EXPLAINS--



THEN AFTER EVERY SURFACE-DWELLER
WAS DEAD THE CHARONS WOULD
EMERGE AND TAKE OVER!



-- THE OCEANS WOULD FLOOD THE
CONTINENTS-- AND THERE WOULD BE
TERRIBLE EARTHQUAKES!



IRON MUNRO GIVES HIS ORDERS, AND SLIPS DOWN THE CORRIDOR LIKE A GHOST!



WELL, SPENCE, HERE'S YOUR
AXIS-TILTER!-- LET'S GO UP
AND HAVE A LOOK AT IT!

WHAT THE HECK IS IT?...



SEE?--A GIANT GYROSCOPE!
HOLY SMOKE! IT MUST
BE TWO MILES ACROSS!--



A HUGE WHEEL WEIGHING MILLIONS OF TONS!--IF
THIS SHOULD START SPINNING IT WILL ACT AGAINST
THE EARTH'S ROTATION, FORCING THE AXIS OUT OF LINE!

-- AND-SO, SPENCE, SOMETHING'S
GOT TO BE DONE ABOUT IT-- NOW--
AND WE'VE GOT TO DO IT!



LUCKY THIS INSPECTION STATION HAS
ALL THIS EQUIPMENT AROUND!



SWIFTLY ASSEMBLING A HEAT-RAY,
IRON MUNRO TRIES DESPERATELY TO
THWART THE GIGANTIC PLAN!---



I DON'T KNOW IF MY PLAN WILL WORK,
BUT I DON'T WANT TO BE AROUND IF
IT DOES!---

THIS WHOLE SECTION OF
THE WHEEL IS RED HOT!---

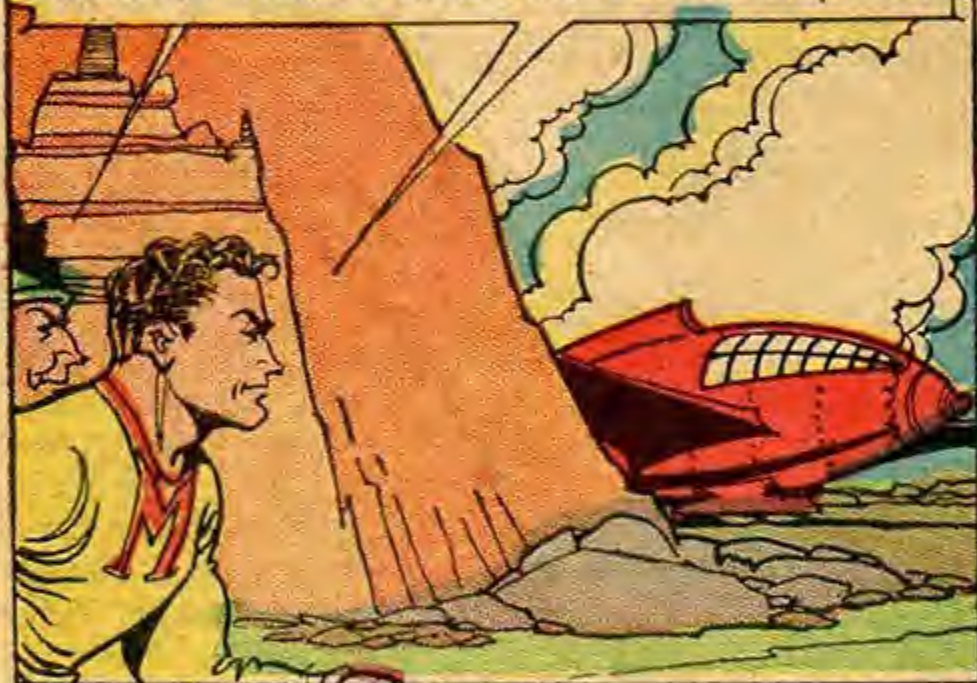


HOUR AFTER HOUR IRON AND SPENCE
FIGHT THEIR WAY TO THE SURFACE!---

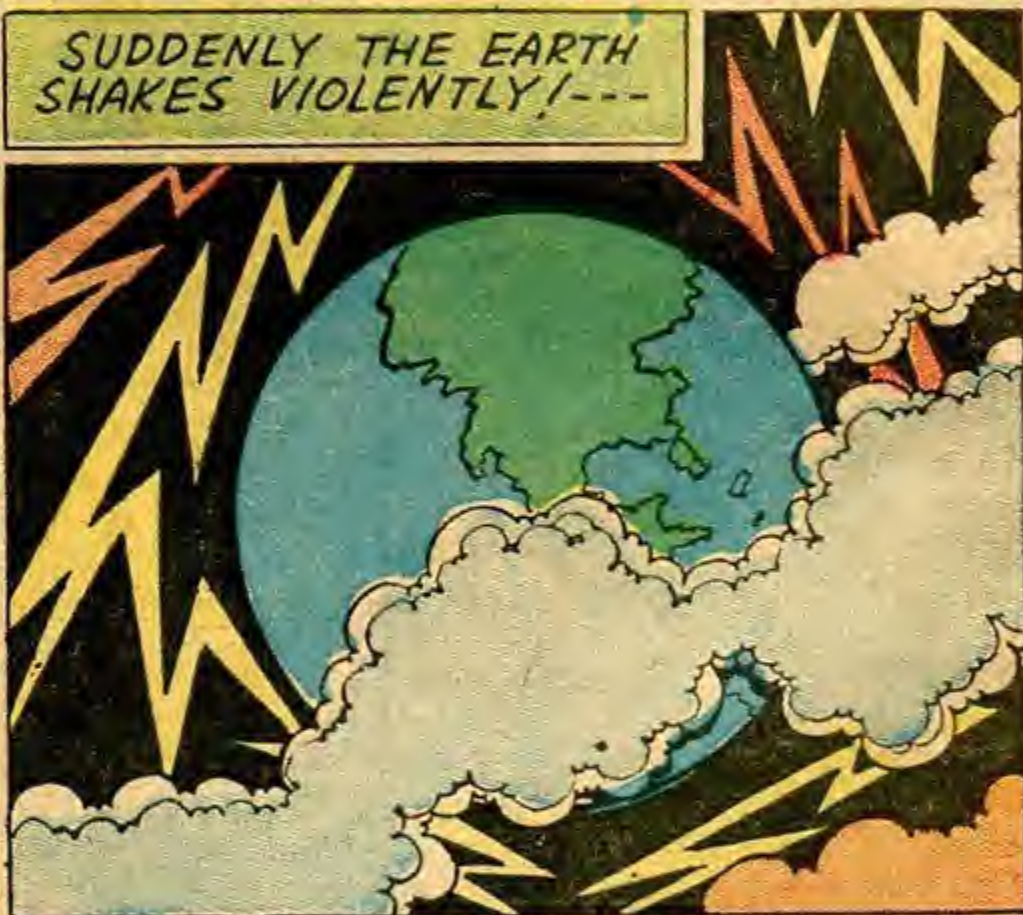


AH! CLEAN AIR AT LAST!-- LOOK,
IRON, THERE'S YOUR SHIP!

YEAH!-- AND ANTO BROUGHT THE
WHOLE ARMY AND AIR FORCE ALONG!

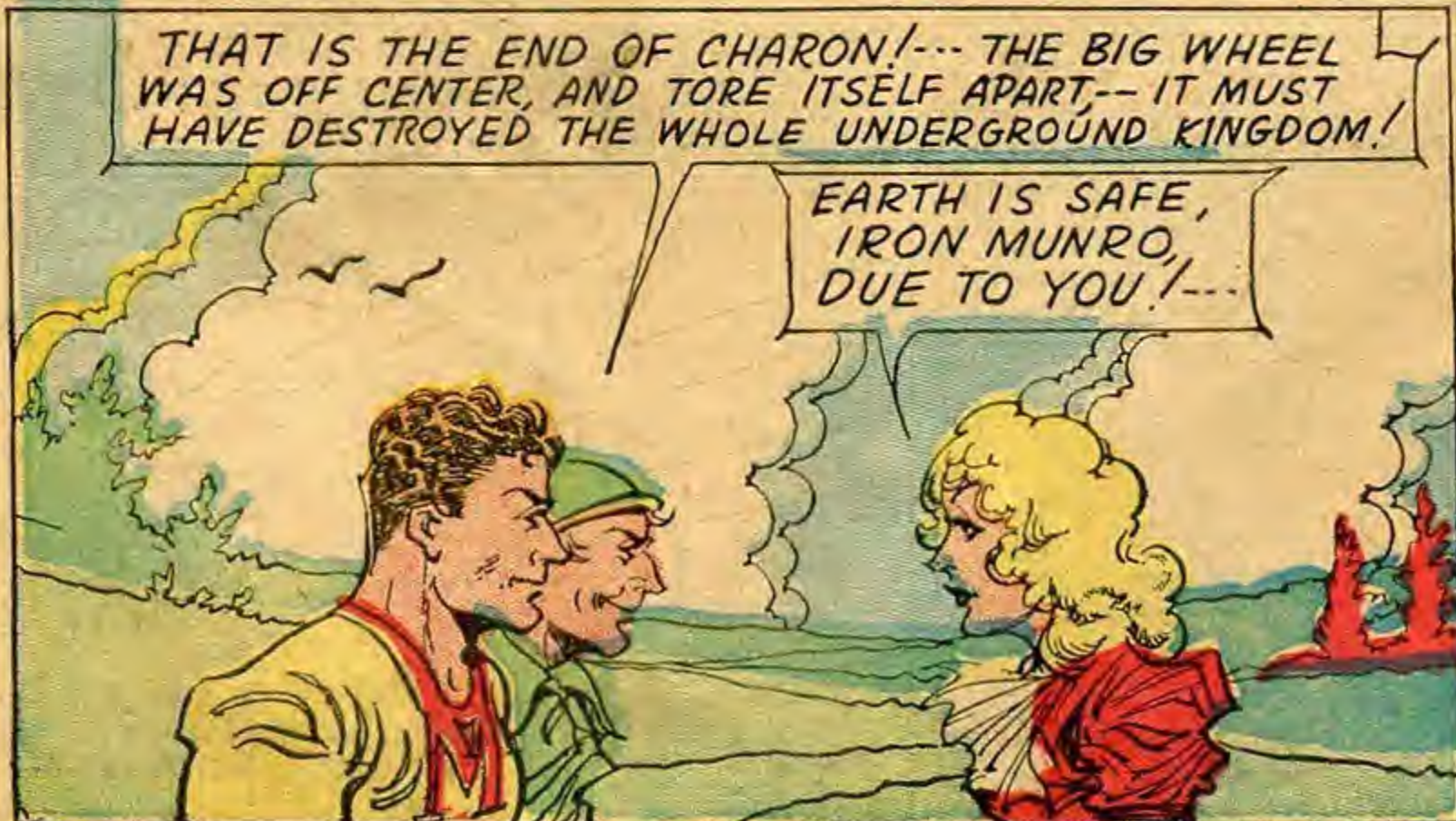


SUDDENLY THE EARTH
SHAKES VIOLENTLY!---



THAT IS THE END OF CHARON!-- THE BIG WHEEL
WAS OFF CENTER, AND TORE ITSELF APART-- IT MUST
HAVE DESTROYED THE WHOLE UNDERGROUND KINGDOM!

EARTH IS SAFE,
IRON MUNRO,
DUE TO YOU!--



EARTH HAS
EVEN MORE
TO THANK
**IRON
MUNRO**
FOR AS YOU
WILL SEE
IN THE NEXT
ISSUE OF,
**SHADOW
COMICS!**



ARMAGEDDON

IT happened—of all places—in Cincinnati. Not that there is anything wrong with Cincinnati, save that it is not the center of the Universe, nor even of the State of Ohio. It's a nice old town and, in its way, second to none. But even its Chamber of Commerce would admit that it lacks cosmic significance. It must have been more coincidence that Gerber the Great—what a name!—was playing Cincinnati when things slipped elsewhere.

Of course, if the episode had become known, Cincinnati would be the most famous city of the world, and little Herbie would be hailed as a modern St. George and get more acclaim, even, than a quiz kid. But no member of that audience in the Bijou Theater remembers a thing about it. Not even little Herbie Westerman, although he had the water pistol to show for it.

He wasn't thinking about the water pistol in his pocket as he sat looking up at the prestidigitator on the other side of the footlights. It was a new water pistol, bought en route to the theater when he'd inveigled his parents into a side trip into the five-and-dime on Vine Street, but at the moment, Herbie was much more interested in what went on upon the stage.

He knew, though, that front-and-back palming seven cards at a time required great finger strength as well as dexterity, and that was what Gerber the Great was doing. There wasn't a telltale click in the shift, either, and Herbie nodded approbation. Then he remembered what was coming next.

He nudged his mother and said, "Ma, ask Pop if he's gotta extra handkerchief."

Out of the corner of his eye, Herbie saw his mother turn her head and in less time than it would take to say "Presto" Herbie was out of his seat and skinning down the aisle. It had been, he felt, a beautiful piece of misdirection and his timing had been perfect.

It was at this stage of the performance—which Herbie had seen before, alone—that Gerber the Great asked if some little boy from the audience

would step to the stage. He was asking it now.

Herbie Westerman had jumped the gun. He was well in motion before the magician had asked the question. At the previous performance, he'd been a bad tenth in reaching the steps from aisle to stage. This time he'd been ready, and he hadn't taken any chances with parental restraint.

"—will please step up on the stage?" And Herbie's foot touched the first of the steps upward right smack on the interrogation point of that sentence. He heard the disappointed scuffle

of other feet behind him, and grinned smugly as he went on up across the footlights.

It was the three-pigeon trick, Herbie knew from the previous performance, that required an assistant from the audience. It was almost the only trick he hadn't been able to figure out. There *must*, he knew, have been a concealed compartment somewhere in that box, but where it could be he couldn't even guess. But this time he'd be holding the box himself. If from that range, he couldn't spot the gimmick, he'd better go back to stamp collecting.

He grinned confidently up at the magician. Not that he, Herbie, would give him away. He was a magician, too, and he understood that there was a freemasonry among magicians and that one never gave away the tricks of another.

He felt a little chilled, though, and the grin faded as he caught the magician's eyes. Gerber the Great, at close range, seemed much older than he had seemed from the other side of the footlights. And somehow different. Much taller, for one thing.

Anyway, here came the box for the pigeon trick. Gerber's regular assistant was bringing it in on a tray. Herbie looked away from the magician's eyes and he felt better. He remembered, even, his reason for being on the stage. The servant limped. Herbie ducked his head to catch a glimpse of the under side of the tray, just in case. Nothing there.

Gerber took the box. The servant limped away and Herbie's eyes followed him suspiciously. Was the limp genuine or was it a piece of misdirection?

The box folded out flat as the proverbial pancake. All four sides hinged to the bottom, the top hinged to one of the sides. There were little brass catches.

Herbie took a quick step back so he could see behind it while the front was displayed to the audience. Yet he saw it now. A triangular compartment built against one side of the lid,

mirror-covered, angles calculated to achieve invisibility. Old stuff. Herbie felt a little disappointed.

The prestidigitator folded the box, mirror-concealed compartment inside. He turned slightly. "Now, my fine young man—"

What happened in Tibet wasn't the only factor; it was merely the final link of a chain.

The Tibetan weather had been unusual that week, highly unusual. It had been warm. More snow succumbed to the gentle warmth than had melted in more years than man could count. The streams ran high, they ran wide and fast.

Along the streams some prayer wheels whirled faster than they had ever whirled. Others, submerged, stopped altogether. The priests, knee-deep in the cold water, worked frantically, moving the wheels nearer to shore where again the rushing torrent would turn them.

There was one small wheel, a very old one that had revolved without cease for longer than any man knew. So long had it been there that no living lama recalled what had been inscribed upon its prayer plate, nor what had been the purpose of that prayer.

The rushing water had neared its axle when the lama Klarath reached for it to move it to safety. Just too late. His foot slid in the slippery mud and the back of his hand touched the wheel as he fell. Knocked loose from its moorings, it swirled down with the flood, rolling along the bottom of the stream, into deeper and deeper water.

While it rolled, all was well.

The lama rose, shivering from his momentary immersion, and went after other of the spinning wheels. What, he thought, could one small wheel matter? He didn't know that—now that other links had broken—only that tiny thing stood between Earth and Armageddon.

The prayer wheel of Wangur Ul rolled on, and on, until—a mile farther down—it struck a ledge, and stopped. That was the moment.

"And now, my fine young man—"

Herbie Westerman—we're back in Cincinnati now—looked up, wondering why the prestidigitator had stopped in midsentence. He saw the face of Gerber the Great contorted as though by a great shock.

Quietly, then, the magician began to chuckle. In the overtones of that soft laughter was all of evil. No one who heard it could have doubted who he was. No one did doubt.

No one moved, no one spoke, none drew a shuddering breath. There are things beyond fear. Only uncertainty causes fear, and the theater was filled with a readful certainty.

The laughter grew. Crescendo, it reverberated into the far dusty corners of the gallery. Nothing—not a fly on the ceiling—moved.

Satan spoke.

"I thank you for your kind attention to a poor magician." He bowed, ironically low. "The performance is ended."

He smiled. "All performances are ended."

On the stage was a dim red radiance. From the head and from each shoulder of the tall figure of the magician there sprang a tiny flame. A naked flame.

Did I mention that Herbie Westerman was a Safety Cadet? It was purely a reflex action. A boy of nine doesn't know much about things like Armageddon, but Herbie Westerman should have known that water would never have put out that fire.

But, as I said, it was purely a reflex action. He yanked out his new water pistol and squirted it at the fire. And the fire *did* vanish, even as a spray from the stream of water ricocheted and dampened the trouser leg of Gerber the Great, who had been facing the other way.

There was a sudden, brief, hissing sound. The lights were growing bright again, and all the other flames were dying, and the sound of wings faded, blended into another sound—the rustling of the audience.

The eyes of the prestidigitator were closed. His voice sounded strangely strained as he said: "This much power I retain. None of you will remember this."

Then, slowly, he turned and picked up the fallen box. He held it out to Herbie Westerman. "You must be more careful, boy," said. "Now hold it so."

He tapped the top lightly with his wand. The door fell open. Three white pigeons flew out of the box. The rustle of their wings was not leathery.

Herbie Westerman's father came down the stairs and, with a purposeful air, took his razor strop off the hook on the kitchen wall.

Mrs. Westerman looked up from stirring the soup on the stove. "Why, Henry," she asked, "are you really going to punish him with that—just for squirting a little water out of the window of the car on the way home?"

Her husband shook his head grimly. "Not for that, Marge. But don't you remember we bought him that water pistol on the way downtown, and that he wasn't near a water faucet after that? Where do you think he filled it?"

He didn't wait for an answer. "When we stopped in at the cathedral to talk to Father Ryan about his confirmation, that's when the little brat filled it. Out of the baptismal font! Holy water he uses in his water pistol!"

He clumped heavily up the stairs, strop in hand.

Rhythmic thwacks and wails of pain floated down the staircase. Herbie—who had saved the world—was having his reward.

THE END.



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